



IAF's FY 2023-2027 Strategic Plan

VISION

A just, peaceful, and prosperous Latin America and Caribbean region in which all people have meaningful opportunities to thrive

MISSION

To invest in underserved people's initiatives and enterprises to advance prosperity, democracy, and safety in their communities.

VALUES

Community-led	We trust and empower community solutions, ownership, and leadership, especially among women and youth
Inclusive	We partner with underserved and marginalized communities
Innovative	We foster agile and entrepreneurial thinking and take informed risks
Collaborative	We build alliances with public, private, and community sectors to catalyze smart and sustainable development
Accountable	We are committed to results, transparency, and impact
Cost-effective	We work directly with local grassroots and civil society organizations, use in-country expertise, and mobilize local resources to minimize costs and promote sustainability

THE IAF MODEL

The IAF partners with local grassroots and civil society organizations to advance community-led development. We directly invest in their visions through small grants, networking, and capacity building.

EVOLVING CONTEXT

This Strategic Plan responds to the evolving realities across Latin America and the Caribbean, with the COVID-19 pandemic having exacerbated deeply rooted challenges.

- Economic contraction has raised unemployment, lowered incomes, and worsened already entrenched social and economic inequalities.
- Loss of income has also deepened food insecurity, with immediate and long-lasting consequences for human development.¹
- Backsliding democracies and entrenched corruption are closing spaces for civil society, increasing government repression and criminalization of civil protest, and catalyzing illegal mining, logging, and the abuse of natural resources and land rights.²
- The region's chronic violence remains rampant, from that inflicted by organized criminal groups, to violence based on gender or ethnicity, and domestic abuse.
- Biodiversity loss, exacerbated by economic and governance crises across Latin America and the Caribbean, far exceeded that of any other region between the 1970s through 2016.³
- An increase in extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, droughts, and large storms, has endangered the lives and livelihoods of millions in the region.
- The combination of economic crises, violence, political persecution, and extreme weather events have been driving large-scale displacements and migration across the region.

¹ FAO, FIDA, OPS, WFP y UNICEF. 2020. *Panorama de la seguridad alimentaria y nutrición en América Latina y el Caribe 2020*. Santiago de Chile. [\[Link\]](#)

² For a helpful review, see "Democracy Tested: Democratic Backsliding in Latin America," a Council on Foreign Relations podcast with Steven Levitsky. [\[Link\]](#)

³ World Wildlife Fund's 2020 *Living Planet Report* [\[Link\]](#)

STRATEGIC GOALS

Expand opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, including through smallholder agriculture and other enterprises, food security, natural resource management, and climate resilience

Strengthen democratic governance by improving the capacity of community groups and other civil society actors to protect their rights, advance inclusion, and promote government accountability

Promote safe and peaceful communities by strengthening their ability to respond to chronic and gender-based violence, crime, unemployment, and irregular migration

PERFORMANCE GOALS

Enhance awareness, understanding, and recognition of the IAF's distinct model and value

- Champion effective and innovative community-led development by engaging external stakeholders
- Maintain Congress' exposure to the value and impact of the IAF's locally-led development model
- Deepen collaboration with relevant U.S. agencies, other funders, academia, and think tanks
- Expand our outreach by connecting with a broader domestic and international audience and leveraging innovative communications technologies

Deepen programmatic excellence

- Adopt creative, inclusive, and innovative programming that builds on our grant experience and technological advancement in the region.
- Modernize our grant management to improve efficiencies and grantee experience in partnering with the IAF
- Ensure IAF programming aligns with its commitment to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility
- Promote standardized approaches to systematic learning at the level of grantees and cohorts

Leverage the IAF partnership model to broaden the scale and sustainability of our work

- Diversify sources of funding for grassroots development, including by expanding and deepening partnerships, co-funding opportunities, and other blended finance models/approaches
- Catalyze innovative approaches that bring together government, corporate sector, non profit, philanthropic, and academic resources to maximize impact
- Promote grantee counterpart commitments

Further advance IAF's commitment to learning and impact

- Modernize our approach to grantee performance monitoring, aiming to generate quality data that is useful to the IAF/grantees, and through a user-friendly interface
- Pursue improved research and evaluation to maximize impact and inform the field of grassroots development
- Expand and promote learning and collaboration across grantees
- Share results, practices, and lessons learned through publications, external events, communications platforms, and grantee exchanges

Attract, retain, and inspire a diverse world-class staff

- Achieve high results, year after year, in FEVS Employee Engagement, New IQ, and Global Satisfaction Indexes
- Institutionalize a culture that embraces inclusion and diversity, advances equity and reduces bias
- Expand opportunities for growth and advancement with an equity lens
- Develop a robust paid internship program
- Support work-life balance as the approach to daily work